

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NDJAME 03852 041504Z
ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5492
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

UNCLAS NDJAMENA 3852

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, PINS

SUBJ: PRESIDENT MALLOUM HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE IN PARIS AND
NDJAMENA

1. PRESIDENT FELIX MALLOUM RETURNED TO NDJAMENA NOVEMBER 2 FOLLOWING 10 DAY PRIVATE VISIT IN SWITZERLAND AND FRANCE. AT HIS DEPARTURE FROM PARIS, GENERAL MALLOUM HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE DURING WHICH HE RE-EMPHASIZED GOC READINESS TO SEEK A RECONCILIATION WITH REBEL FACTIONS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF A NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. HE BRIEFLY REVIEWED HISTORY OF LIBYAN MILITARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE OCCUPATION OF THE AOUZOU STRIP QUOTE THROUGH THE DUPLICITY OF GOUKOUNI UNQUOTE AND THE ATTACK ON ABECHÉ BY EL BAGLANI ELEMENTS SUPPORTED BY LIBYA. MALLOUM STRESSED THAT THE MATTER HAD BEEN TURNED OVER TO THE OAU AND THAT CHAD WAS NOW AWAITING A REPORT FROM PRESIDENT BONGO ON STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS.

2. AFTER HIS RETURN TO NDJAMENA, PRESIDENT MALLOUM HELD A MORE UNCLASSIFIED

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DETAILED SECOND PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH TOOK ON A MUCH HARDER TONE. HE STRESSED THAT HIS PRIVATE VISIT TO SWITZERLAND WAS FOR MEDICAL REASONS RELATING TO HIS QUOTE PHYSICALLY DIMINISHED UNQUOTE CONDITION FOLLOWING HIS RELEASE FROM PRISON ON APRIL 13, 1975. HE ADDED THAT ALTHOUGH THE VISIT HAD BEEN A PRIVATE ONE IT WAS NOT MERELY A VACATION, SINCE HE HAD HELD MEETINGS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER OF FRANCE AND WITH CERTAIN SWISS

AUTHORITIES INCLUDING OFFICIALS AT THE PILATUS AIRCRAFT FACTORY. MOST OF THIS SECOND PRESS CONFERENCE WAS DEVOTED TO A REFUTATION OF CHARGES CARRIED BY THE NEW CLANDESTINE RADIO STATION, QUOTE THE VOICE OF THE CHADIAN PEOPLE IN STRUGGLE UNQUOTE, WHICH HAD BEGUN BROADCASTING DURING THE PRESIDENT'S EUROPEAN TRIP (SEE NDJAMENA 3851 (NOTAL)).

3. AMONG THE CLAIMS WHICH MALLOUM REFUTED WAS ONE THAT THE GOC HAD REFUSED TO LET THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CARRY OUT AN EVACUATION OF WOUNDED AND CIVILIAN PRISONERS FROM BARDAI LAST JULY. THIS WAS BACKED UP THE FOLLOWING DAY IN A PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE HEAD OF THE CHADIAN RED CROSS WHO RELEASED COPIES OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS. (FYI - EMBASSY CAN ATTEST THAT MALLOUM WAS COMPLETELY COOPERATIVE WITH INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, AND IT WAS LIBYAN INSISTANCE THAT NO FRENCH OR AMERICANS BE INVOLVED IN EVACUATION COMBINED WITH LACK OF FUNDS WHICH SUNK RED CROSS PROPOSAL). GENERAL MALLOUM ALSO STRESSED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL THAT LIBYA BORE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPPORTING REBEL ELEMENTS IN CHAD IN VIOLATION OF THE OAU CHARTER AND THAT ITS CITIZENS MIGHT WELL FIND THAT RELATIVES OF VICTIMS OF AGRESSION MIGHT RETALIATE AGAINST LIBYAN EXPATRIATES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE GOC CONSIDERED LIBYA ALONE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEAD, WOUNDED AND PRISONERS FROM BARDAI AND OTHER MILITARY ACTIONS BECAUSE GOUKOUNI WAS MERELY A LIBYA FRONT MAN. IN ADDITION, MALLOUM STRESSED THAT ANY STATEMENTS MADE BY CAPTURED SOLDIERS SHOULD

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BE DISCOUNTED TOTALLY SINCE WHATEVER THEY ARE SAYING IN TRIPOLI MERELY WAS DONE TO SAVE THEIR SKINS. BRADFORD

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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